

1994 preparation for the mission, staff planners analyzed the threat and determined that there was only a minimal requirement for the deployment of two smoke HMMWVs (high-mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicles) for possible use in dispersing crowds. There was, however, a significant requirement (beyond the capability of military police assets) to control crowds and possible riots with incapacitating but non-lethal agents.

The 82d Division chemical section quickly focused its efforts on obtaining pepper spray from civilian agencies for use by military personnel. This operation demonstrated that non-lethal agents such as cayenne pepper can help commanders deal with hostile crowds and clear urban areas, but it also demonstrated that division leaders and soldiers lacked experience in employing pepper spray.

The Army's Training and Doctrine Command therefore assigned proponentcy for this issue to the U.S. Army Chemical School and directed that doctrine be developed to support training with and storage and employment of cayenne pepper.

A chemical company specializing in the employment of non-lethal weapons and doctrine based upon these requirements could give every light division commander a significant offensive alternative to lethal force. Ideally, chemical companies could store and employ non-lethal weapons and provide personnel decontamination as required.

The use of so-called "smart bombs"

during Operation *Desert Storm* represented a first step in the effort to reduce collateral damage. The evolutionary role of non-lethal weapons will continue to increase as this effort grows more important at all levels.

While it is quite possible that one day each soldier may head off to battle with a non-lethal weapon (such as a pepper spray can), it is also important that the Army take advantage of larger scale non-lethal weapons that require collective employment. Since these weapons involve the use of non-lethal chemicals, this mission would be well-suited to the Chemical Corps.

Less than lethal (LTL) and riot control agent (RCA) programs range from large volume RCA dispersers to RCA foam agent producers (for area denial). Even a relatively low-technology modification of the chemical company's organic pressurized water-spray equipment could enable light infantry commanders to control and disperse crowds with water. Chemical companies using the technologies described could augment military police (enabling them to continue their traffic control and enemy prisoner of war missions) by foaming large areas and denying them to personnel or by controlling riots using water spray equipment.

It is important to begin developing chemical units capable of using available basic riot control technologies. The Chemical Corps should commit to modernizing the force by placing a greater

emphasis on the development of non-lethal weapons as well as working to ensure that the Chemical Weapons Convention Treaty allows their incorporation into the force as soon as they are developed and tested for safety. By establishing non-lethal weapon units early, the Chemical Corps can best position itself for the successful future integration of developing technologies (including proposed antitraction, antimateriel, and metal embrittlement technologies).

Because most unconventional light division missions have limited smoke requirements, dual-purpose chemical companies are ideal for reconfiguration to incorporate existing non-lethal technologies. The chemical corps should pursue this requirement because the technology involves chemicals, or it could simply modify already existing water haul and spray equipment. Augmenting the military police in riot and crowd control could significantly assist light division commanders and also prove the value of having a chemical company at the division level.

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# Tactical PSYOPs

## Supporting the Infantry Brigade and Battalion

MAJOR JAMES C. BOISSELLE

Psychological operations (PSYOPs) have been a key part of every major military operation in the past several years. Elements of the 4th Psychological Opera-

tions Group (Airborne) and selected Reserve Component PSYOP units have operated alongside Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps forces in major opera-

tions, including *Just Cause* in Panama, *Desert Shield/Storm* in the Persian Gulf, *Restore Hope* in Somalia, and *Uphold Democracy* in Haiti. A PSYOP task force

is now a common element in the force structure of nearly every major contingency operation planned by the unified commanders-in-chief. Whether in combat or in peacetime, PSYOPs offer unit commanders some unique capabilities.

Because of the limited number of PSYOP assets, and the constant demand placed upon both the active and reserve components for contingencies and exercises, few infantry units have an opportunity to work with PSYOP elements outside of combat training center rotations and a limited number of division and brigade level exercises. Consequently, PSYOPs are not integrated into brigade and battalion contingency deployments or into training for combat and peace operations.

To help fill the information void concerning PSYOPs, I offer here some key terms, roles and missions, and tips for employment.

The most important terms for the infantry brigade and battalion are defined as follows:

**Tactical PSYOP Team (TPT).** A TPT is normally attached to or in direct support of a maneuver battalion. It consists of three soldiers (led by a staff sergeant), one M1025 HMMWV (high-mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicle), SINCGARS radios, and both mounted and manpacked loudspeaker systems. The TPT leader acts as the PSYOP staff planner for the battalion.

**Brigade PSYOP Support Element (BPSE).** The BPSE is normally attached to a brigade staff under the supervision of the S-3. It consists of five soldiers (led by a captain), one HMMWV, SINCGARS radios, and a communications specialist with tactical satellite equipment (if required) and high-frequency radios. This element coordinates its operations with a division PSYOP support element (DPSE), located with the G-3.

**Psychological Operations Task Force (POTF).** The POTF is normally force structured as a separate component command of a joint task force or theater headquarters. The POTF is responsible for developing the PSYOP campaign plan for an operation and disseminating or executing the supporting products and actions. All PSYOP actions at any level must be

coordinated with the POTF. Such a task force may be joint or combined.

**PSYOP Objective.** This objective is a statement of a measurable response that reflects the desired attitude or behavior change of a selected foreign target.

**PSYOP Program.** This is a sequential, coordinated presentation of a series

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of actions or products to achieve a specific PSYOP objective.

**Theme.** A subject, topic, or line of persuasion used to achieve a psychological objective.

**Target Audience.** An individual or group selected for influence or attack by means of psychological operations.

#### **Roles and Missions**

The major roles and missions of tactical PSYOP elements can be best illustrated with a series of vignettes drawn from recent operations:

**PSYOP Intelligence Collection.** Tactical PSYOP teams act in a manner similar to a scout platoon for the POTF, operating in widely dispersed areas and forwarding relevant information for analysis. PSYOP intelligence is normally time sensitive, reflecting a group's attitudes and emotions that could change on the basis of any number of variables. The

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teams must quickly gather PSYOP intelligence and forward it through higher PSYOP support elements to the POTF. Intelligence specialists and target audience experts at the POTF analyze the data for possible development into a theme or an addition to a program.

During Operation *Restore Hope*, several PSYOP teams supported the 2d Bri-

gade, 10th Mountain Division, during a period of unrest in Kismayu, Somalia. The brigade, designated the United Nations element's local quick-reaction force, deployed to the southern port city in response to violence between rival clans. Upon their arrival, the teams began gathering critical intelligence that clearly showed the city divided between two clans, one in the north and another in the south.

As part of the PSYOP preparation for a planned cordon and search of the city and confiscation of weapons, PSYOP teams learned that the people of one clan feared that only their section would be searched while the other would be left in a stronger position to attack. When this information was presented to the brigade commander, he changed the sequential search plan and directed that areas in both sections be cordoned and searched at the same time. PSYOP teams, using vehicle-mounted loudspeakers, broadcast throughout the area that the entire city was being searched and that weapons should be placed outside on the ground. The timely PSYOP intelligence and subsequent change to the maneuver plan contributed to the success of the cordon operation.

**Tactical Dissemination.** Because tactical PSYOP teams are a constant presence among the people in operations other than war, they are effective communicators. In Northern Iraq, in Somalia, and throughout Haiti, it was recognized that TPTs provided credible information. Among the many ways of disseminating this information were handbills, newspapers, posters, and loudspeaker broadcasts. Nontraditional methods of communicating have also been used effectively, including the distribution of T-shirts in Mogadishu and Port-Au-Prince as a gesture of the good will and friendship of U.S. forces.

Obviously, tactical dissemination also has a significant combat role. The ability of PSYOP teams to encourage surrender and desertion is well documented. There are several types of loudspeaker systems that can be mounted in helicopters, on armored or wheeled vehicles, on small boats, or carried in rucksacks. Enemy forces cannot escape the message

in a broadcast, and an effective message can significantly affect their will to fight.

The most vivid example of a surrender message in combat occurred on Faylaka Island during the first days of the ground war in the Persian Gulf. A PSYOP team, operating a 2,700-watt loudspeaker from an armed U.S. Marine Corps UH-1N helicopter, flew several times around the island accompanied by two Cobra gunships. The PSYOP message was simple—surrender tomorrow at the island's radio tower compound in troop formation without weapons. The combined effect of the message and the show of force succeeded. When the Marine forces arrived at the appointed time, more than 1,400 unarmed Iraqi soldiers, including a general officer, were waiting in formation at the tower.

**Face-to-face Communications.** Operations other than war have caused a renewed emphasis on face-to-face communications. Although practiced daily in business and other civilian pursuits, this type of interpersonal communication was not trained to any great extent in military units. Today, commanders at all levels must communicate with local leaders and dignitaries in other countries to achieve specified objectives. In Somalia, company, battalion, and brigade commanders were frequently involved in discussions with local people.

PSYOP teams train to be effective communicators. Team members are aware of cross-cultural communication techniques and are skilled in the use of interpreters. They are aware of the intricacies of dealing with local leaders and other key communicators who often have hidden agendas that could cause trouble for the unit. PSYOP team members advise the units they support to avoid making any promises, as hard as that might be in certain circumstances.

In Somalia, PSYOP teams used face-to-face communications techniques extensively while working with a clan in the northern section of Mogadishu in the supported brigade's sector. The clan was trying to establish a district council as part of the United Nations initiative to rebuild Somalia's governmental infrastructure. The successful establishment of this council was critical to the force protec-

tion of infantry and armor units that had established bases in the area. The attached BPSE developed a PSYOP program to support this effort and received the approval of the brigade commander and the POTF to execute it.

Working with civil affairs personnel, PSYOP specialists visited the district daily to gather PSYOP intelligence and talk with key leaders. In their conversations, PSYOP personnel were careful to articulate the appropriate PSYOP themes without being trapped into making promises to provide construction supplies, police uniforms, or other items requested by the district leaders. The PSYOP objective was to increase local support for the new council, and face-to-face communications techniques helped accomplish this goal.

**Crowd Control.** Few situations can be more unnerving to an infantry squad or platoon than being caught in the middle of thousands of people with hostile elements operating from within the crowd. Rules of engagement cannot always provide an appropriate range of options for the maneuver element faced with the mission of protecting itself while accom-

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plishing the specified mission that caused it to operate near the crowd. Warning shots often prove ineffective; crowds can sense that no serious action will follow. PSYOP teams can provide a suitable, effective crowd control option that enables the infantry element to continue its mission.

In Haiti, elements of the 10th Mountain Division had the mission of crowd control in Port-Au-Prince during the 30 September anniversary commemorating the 1991 coup. Several days before that date, the joint PSYOP task force initiated an intensive program aimed at discouraging violence and encouraging a peaceful demonstration. Tactical PSYOP teams disseminated products on "how to demonstrate" and broadcast non-violence

themes by ground and aerial loudspeaker systems. Similar messages were conveyed to the armed forces of Haiti and police as well. On 30 September, the joint task force conducted a show of force with four battalions throughout the city. This show of force, combined with the PSYOP program, resulted in a calm crowd with no major incidents.

**Graduated Response.** PSYOP elements have become an integral part of graduated response, a tactic designed to reduce the loss of life on both the friendly and enemy sides and to reduce collateral damage as well. This tactic was employed frequently by units in Somalia and Haiti during raids of militia compounds, weapons caches, and safe houses.

Graduated response offers the tactical commander a way to clear the objective of noncombatants and those who want to surrender. Once the objective is prepared in this way, a reasonable amount of force can be applied to accomplish the mission. Once again, rules of engagement may dictate that a series of warnings and displays of force that escalate in severity be used before applying overwhelming force. PSYOP teams enable the tactical commander to execute a successful graduated response plan. During Operation Uphold Democracy in early October 1994, one task force planned a series of raids on suspected locations of members of an activist political organization and other hostile individuals known as *attaches*. The tactical commander decided to use a graduated response tactic that began with TPTs broadcasting surrender messages, followed by a countdown sequence. Approximately 80 percent of the individuals at each objective surrendered and the rest offered no resistance when the assault teams entered the building. Not a shot was fired during the entire operation.

**Deception Operations Support.** PSYOP elements are uniquely qualified to provide support to deception operations. Too often, however, PSYOP elements are tasked with *developing* rather than *supporting* the deception plan. Tactical teams can provide sonic deception as part of a larger deception story developed by the battlefield deception element at division level or by the S-3 at brigade

or battalion. Teams have access to sets of tapes with recordings of tracked vehicles, weapons fire, dismounted movement, trucks, helicopters, and other battlefield sounds. To be convincing to the enemy force, these loudspeaker tapes should be used with the actual equipment or personnel that the sounds are imitating. If a TPT is trying to portray an M1 tank platoon in a certain area, an actual M1 tank should drive around the area for at least a brief period to enhance the effect.

#### **Tips for Employing PSYOPs**

The following five tips will help an infantry brigade or battalion in using PSYOPs:

**Integrate PSYOP planners in the S-3 section to achieve the best results.** To be effective, PSYOPs must be integrated closely with current and future operations. Too often, the PSYOP planner is attached to the S-5 section, if there is one, or at battalion level attached to a company and forgotten. The planner can offer unique information concerning the enemy or civilians in the area and can coordinate effective external PSYOP support. To best accomplish these tasks, PSYOP planners need to be active players in the operations section.

**Allow the PSYOP planner time to brief the commanders and staff.** PSYOP personnel have access to special studies and assessments that provide unique information pertaining to hostile, neutral, and friendly elements operating in the supported unit's sector. This information is constantly updated and analyzed on the basis of PSYOP intelligence

gathered by the tactical teams and other sources. Allow the PSYOPs planner the time to present this information during operations order or tactical operations center updates.

**Give the PSYOP planner clear guidance on the brigade or battalion mission and intent.** The PSYOP element is there to support the commander. The planner can employ or coordinate for a variety of unique information assets to help the unit accomplish its mission. To do this, the PSYOP representative needs to discuss with the commander his intent for the employment of PSYOPs. The PSYOP planner owes the commander a concise laydown of the overall PSYOP campaign to help him with his own plan for PSYOP support.

**Include the PSYOP planner early in the mission analysis process.** The recent operations in Somalia and Haiti have shown that there is a great demand for PSYOP assets. There were many competing requests from brigades and battalions for PSYOP products to support their operations. The earlier a request reaches the POTF, the better the chances it can be filled. The earlier the PSYOP planner is involved in the mission analysis, the sooner he can submit a request for support.

**Maintain a distinction among PSYOPs, civil affairs (CA), and special forces (SF).** Although they fall under the umbrella of special operations forces, PSYOPs, CA, and SF have distinct missions. In an operations other than war scenario, you might find the PSYOP soldiers trying to prevent civilian interference at a roadblock or village market

by distributing handbills, talking with the people, and working through key communicators. At the same time, the CA soldier might be coordinating for a new water well to be dug to improve the quality of life for the local populace. The SF soldier might be conducting special reconnaissance in a remote area or training a local police or army force. The tasks complement each other but are not interchangeable among the specialties.

Although scarce during peacetime training, PSYOPs are critical to brigade and battalion operations during contingency deployments. The integration of PSYOP elements in the combat training centers is a step toward gaining an understanding of their unique capabilities. As the information age continues to affect the conduct of war and operations other than war, PSYOPs can be expected to play an increased role in the management of foreign perceptions, attitudes, emotions, and behavior. As the infantry brigade and battalion deploy into the global information environment, PSYOPs will continue to provide the commander with a tool and the ability to accomplish the mission quickly, cleanly, and with minimal losses in men and materiel.

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